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ABSTRACT

Cross-cultural psychology had its beginnings at the turn of the century when W. H. R. Rivers made his famous investigations on perception and other processes. In the mid 1960's and early 1970's cross-cultural research as a method in psychology gained a momentum that led to an almost unchecked acceleration. The author details the recent growth in popularity of the field and points to the energies that can be called "hard-core" cross-cultural psychological efforts. Attention is given to the historical controversy between cross-cultural psychology and psychological anthropology. The author points to the fact that the two disciplines do not share the same data base, that is, ethnographers rely for the most part on naturally occurring mundane events while psychologists rely on experiments (experimentation versus naturalism). In the future, cross-cultural researchers in psychology will depend increasingly on cross-cultural "models." This will be done so as to integrate strategies and findings which may lead to more complete and valid generalizations about human behavior. The author closes his discussion with a brief summary of four cross-cultural models. (Author/PC)

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THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF CROSS-CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY*

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The pretentious title is designed to give a tidy structure allowing a brief three-part survey of cross-cultural psychology. Being a non-conserver, highly field-dependent, and anal retentive, I need this structure. From about 1900 to 1970 is the "past," while the "present" spans the last year or so. The future, about which anyone can speculate, is the future.

Virtually everything I will have to say about at least the historical summary will not be new to those who strongly identify with cross-cultural psychology. But with as yet not enough psychologists familiar with the "goings on" in this area of psychology, I view my humble part in this symposium to be one of helping to spread the word.

The Past

It is now a cliche to say that cross-cultural psychology got its start at the turn of the century when W. H. R. Rivers made his famous investigations on perception and other processes at the Torres Straits and elsewhere. And it is almost a cliche to say that very little headway since then has been made in the same domains of psychology. With Rivers' work as the landmark that psychologists

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acknowledge, it can be said with nearly heathen overtones that for a span of about 40 or 50 years after that famous series of expeditions those who did cross-cultural research in psychology were anecdotalists. They have also been called sabbatical opportunists who went on intellectual safaris about every seven years. The major reason we can discern a constant but low cross-cultural output in psychology journals during those years is because not everyone had a sabbatical on the same seven-year cycle.

Each academician who went on these safaris would return to report how "primitive" people thought, or perceived, or reared children. Others adapted and employed tests of various sorts, and still others observed how different groups of people reacted in a great variety of social psychological situations. There were few genuine attempts to develop a systematic approach in these investigations, or to use a cross-cultural "model" for research orientation, for such a model did not exist. Researchers did, however, follow the leads of scholars such as Rivers, Spearman, Burt, Piaget and many other psychologists, and anthropologists such as Levi-Bruhl, Levi-Strauss, and Tylor. A highly readable summary of some philosophical orientations and assumptions that many researchers used during the earlier years can be found in Cole and Scribner (1974).

In the immediate past--specifically the mid-1960's and early 1970's--cross-cultural research as a method in psychology gained a momentum that led to an almost unchecked acceleration. Consider, for example, some of the major developments that took place during the

period 1965-1973:

• In 1966 the International Union of Psychological Science, with a subvention from UNESCO, started the International Journal of Psychology. IUPS also published, in the same year, the International Directory of Psychologists.

• In 1967 Harry Triandis started the Cross-Cultural Social Psychology Newsletter. Its editorship was subsequently transferred to Yasumasa Tanaka and more recently to John Dawson, and the title has been changed to the Cross-Cultural Psychology Newsletter. Also in 1967 an increasing number of doctoral dissertations were being done. For instance, John Berry's study of the perceptual skills of Eskimos and the Temne of West Africa was finished, and a German psychologist, Lutz Eckensberger, defended his dissertation, Methodenprobleme der Kulturvergleichenden Psychologie (Eckensberger, 1970).

• In 1968 the late F. Kenneth Berrien was instrumental in organizing, through the East-West Center (a few years before the Culture Learning Institute started), a meeting of some 25 psychologists who generally identify with the cross-cultural method.

• In 1969 the Center for Cross-Cultural Research was started at Western Washington State College, and a year later the first issue of the Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology appeared, as did the 1970 Directory of Cross-Cultural Research and Researchers. The Directory was an extensive elaboration of what Berry amassed in 1968 in the International Journal of Psychology (3, 137-148).

• A Center for Cross-Cultural Training and Research was started in Hilo, Hawaii, but its current status is not known. I believe the Culture Learning Institute of the East-West Center started in 1971.

• The American Psychological Association had a cross-cultural symposium on its 1970 program. At the same convention the International Council of Psychologists held a peripheral cross-cultural symposium.

• In 1972 the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology was founded. The first meeting was held in Hong Kong, and earlier that year the Canadian Chapter of IACCP met. There has also been a meeting of the African chapter of IACCP. In the same year the Society of Cross-Cultural Research was formed at the University of Pittsburgh, and included members from Anthropology, Sociology, Political Science, and Psychology. Its second meeting was in Boston in February of this year.

• Several papers on cross-cultural symposiums have been on the most recent programs of both the Canadian and American Psychological Association conventions.

A spate of books have recently appeared. In addition to general, very useful surveys of the cross-cultural method (e.g., Naroll and Cohen, 1970; Przeworski and Teune, 1970; Holt and Turner, 1970), psychologists have written books on method (Manaster and Havighurst, 1972; Triandis et al., 1972; Brislin, Lonner, and Thorndike, 1973), as well as books on cognition, intelligence, and perception (Segall, Campbell, and Herskovits, 1966; Cole, Gay, Glick, and Sharp, 1971; Vernon, 1969;

Lloyd, 1972; Berry and Dasen, 1973, and Cole and Scribner, 1974). At least two books on cross-cultural testing have appeared, one on "mental tests" (Cronbach and Drenth, 1972) and another on projectives (Abel, 1973)--the latter being a more current version than the Lindzey (1961) treatment. Edited books of readings have been ample, including Price-Williams (1969), Lambert and Weisbrod (1971) and Al-Issa and Dennis (1970). Books on personality and psychiatry have appeared (Torrey, 1972, Kiev, 1972, and LeVine, 1973), and two extensive reviews of recent cross-cultural psychology literature have appeared (Triandis, Malpass, and Davidson, 1971, 1973). Also, the Directory (mentioned above) has been revised and nearly doubled in size (Berry, Lonner, and Leroux, 1973).

Various behavioral science journals with an "other culture" focus continue to emerge. Ethos (edited by D. Price-Williams and W. Goldschmidt) and Ethnicity (edited by Andrew Greeley) are two notable newcomers. Additionally, other publications and books in series have started. The Sage Publications series, Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology, is designed to include book-length treatments on method and research in various disciplines. The first volume in this series is in press (Brislin, Bochner, and Lonner, 1974), the second volume, on political science issues, is shaping up, and additional volumes are in the works. Another new source of cultural material is the Culture Learning Institute's Topics in Culture Learning, an irregularly appearing publication which started in 1973.

The Present

Such rapid growth can only be called astounding, and may be unprecedented in recent years in all of Psychology. But there is more to come, and soon. The second international meeting of IACCP is in Kingston later this year (where, as part of a most impressive program, there will be a symposium entitled "Is Cross-Cultural Psychology in a Crisis?"), and the Interamerican Congress of Psychology, to meet next in Bogota, Colombia, will have a similar symposium. The New York Academy of Sciences is planning a conference on cross-cultural issues in psychology, and there are efforts to create an "international" division within the APA (with the International Council of Psychologists being the chief lobbyist for this seemingly inevitable expansion of the APA structure). The next big publication effort will be the Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology, a three-volume work edited by Harry Triandis and containing some 40 chapters written by hand-picked cross-culturalists. This Allyn and Bacon project will appear in middle or late 1976.

Nearly all of the above depict energies that can be called "hard-core" cross-cultural psychological efforts. Related publications and conferences abound, for instance in cross-cultural counseling, communication, education, mental health and social change, linguistics, and other areas. Perhaps the best known of these recent peripheral efforts is Torrey's (1972) most enjoyable little book on witchdoctors and psychiatrists, and Bronfenbrenner's (1970) contract of United States and Soviet child-rearing and educational practices. These

books are now in paperback, a good indication of their popularity and the growing interest in Third and Fourth world movements.

What do all these efforts mean? Some recent trends seem both honest and masochistic (e.g., "is cross-cultural psychology in a crisis?") and it is good that these questions are being asked. Maybe growth has to be checked, or maybe the glut of publications and conferences will seek their own levels, reaching a plateau for a period so that we do not become dazed by the sheer volume of it all, paralyzed by "growth shock."

A couple of major trends are worth mentioning here. One is that the days of the one-shot, two-culture comparisons are over, since they cannot really go anywhere. Secondly, researchers must be wary of the good possibility that doors to "other cultures" may be locked. Psychologists have certainly experienced these refusals, and it is ominous that even anthropologists are currently experiencing difficulties in gaining access to other cultures. As food for thought, here is what was recently reported in Parade (a Sunday Supplement with a circulation of over 30 million) about Harry Klein, a resident of Tubai, an island 450 miles south of Tahiti:

> Klein doesn't think much of the other Americans he occasionally sees pass through Tubai and the other islands. Missionaries irritate him; he thinks the code they preach is essentially alien to the Polynesians. College professors don't impress him either. An American came here some time ago to study the economy of Tubai for a Ph.D. thesis. Comments Klein sourly:

"Now he'll go home and write a bloody lot of junk. What for? Maybe it's good for him. Might even make him a big man, a professor. Then he can teach the same junk to other students. Here no one will ever read it or care about it (cited in Harrington, 1973, p. 22).

Related ethical issues (summarized more completely in Brislin et al, 1974) concerns the orientations that cross-cultural researchers take. For example, Tagumpay-Castillo (1968), a Filipino social scientist, classified some types of cross-cultural scholars in the following way:

The "data-exporter." He is, in the words of Professor Alex Inkeles, the fellow who does research "safari style." He takes everything he can by way of data and leaves nothing of value to the country of study. Sometimes he is called the "hit and run" researcher, with more "runs" than "hits." If research were a movie with a plot, he would easily be the villian.

The "hypothesis-tester" and "theory-builder." He has some theory as to how development proceeds, and his aim in overseas research is to add as many cultures or societies to his sample as he can in order to arrive at a universal generalization.

The "greenhorn." We can usually tell the newcomer from the "old-timer." The former has THE explanation, the latter has only a hunch.

The "idea-stimulator" and "research-facilitator." He is a real gem. Professionally secure, very competent, he has no great compulsion to see his byline. He asks the right questions so that we may figure out for ourselves what the right answers might be; he assists in obtaining research support so that these answers might be forthcoming. Most of all, the research project is ours, not his. The only flaw of this precious gem is that he is such a rare specimen.

The "penny-collaborator." He happens to have access to some money, not too much, but some. "How about a cooperative project?" he says. "I'll provide the money and you do the study."

The "professional overseas researcher." To him, overseas research is a way of life. He lives from research grant to research grant. "Tough life," he says, "I can't stand the winters in New York anymore."

The "CIA scholar." Everyone says he exists and is reputedly doing an excellent piece of basic strategic research, but it is impossible to describe him because like the "Invisible Man," we cannot see him (Tagumpay-Castillo, 1968, pp. 30-32).

The Future

The sheer increase in cross-cultural research and the heterogeneity of approaches taken are of growing concern to both

cross-cultural and other psychologists who are on the outside looking in. With regard to studies dealing with culture and cognition, for example, Cole and Scribner (1974) have implied that the outpouring of findings from around the globe represent "trees in search of a forest." The implication is that an integration of research is needed in an effort to guide future research.

Three problem areas (among many) which continue to concern most cross-cultural psychologists are: 1) the coexistence of cross-cultural psychology and (psychological) anthropology; 2) the need to scrutinize the independent variable in cross-cultural research, and 3) the recommended use of "models" as research guides.

Cross-Cultural Psychology versus Psychological Anthropology: Competing Paradigms?

Cross-cultural psychology is sometimes--and probably unjustifiably--equated with psychological anthropology. That is, the two extremes of the sister disciplines of Psychology (with its penchant for experimentation and empiricism) and Anthropology (with its historical roots in total understanding through complete "cultural immersion") converge in the middle, forming a balance between experimentation and a phenomenological type of understanding. The psychological anthropologist Robert Edgerton recently asserted that this "convergence" is more artificial than real, and that fundamental differences remain. The issue is one of experimentation versus naturalism as competing strategies in attempts to verify ultimate "truth" about human behavior. Edgerton writes:

Anthropology's anti-experimental convictions have been described in many ways. The roots are deep in anthropological history, and they are paralleled in phemonology and existentialism. At heart, anthropologists are naturalists whose commitment is to the phenomena themselves. Anthropologists have always believed that human phenomena can best be understood by procedures that are primarily sensitive to context, be it situational, social, or cultural. Our [anthropological] methods are primarily unobtrusive, nonreactive ones; we observe, we participate, we learn, hopefully we understand. We rarely experiment, and then only under special conditions. This is our unspoken paradigm and it is directly at odds with the discovery of truth by experimentation which, at least as many anthropologists see it, ignores context and creates reactions (1974 , pp. 63-64).

The work of Cole and his associates, claims Edgerton, may be the only current hope for a true fusion of the two approaches (see below). Cole himself is constantly concerned not only about whether or not his research endeavors are appropriate and meaningful, but also about an essential historical divergence between psychology and anthropology:

> It must be obvious . . . that there is a very wide gulf between ethnographic and psychological approaches to the study of cognition. The two disciplines do not share the same data base--ethnographers rely for the most part on naturally occurring, mundane events while psychologists rely on experiments.

> Ethnographers reject experiments as artificial, while psychologists avoid natural behavior sequences as ambiguous (Cole, 1974, in press).

The Analysis of the Independent Variable

Related to the anthropologist's criticism of psychological experimentation is the problem of the meaning of the independent variable. Several researchers have recently commented on this problem. For instance, Triandis, Malpass and Davidson (1971), in concluding their review of cross-cultural psychological research for an anthropology publication, noted several gaps in research activities. One of these gaps, they say, is that there has been insufficient progress in describing independent variables--ecology, environments, etc. are their examples--that determine performance on dependent variables of interest. They say, for example, that

> . . . one finds [in the literature they reviewed] repeatedly the statement that the respondent's level of education is a major determinant of his responses to perceptual, cognitive, or attitudinal tasks. Yet in most studies there is no further analysis of the meaning of the educational variable. What exactly mediates between education and the other phenomena? Is it literacy, participation in institutional environments, the manipulation of symbols, conformity to a life style requiring attention to time, getting rewarded for what you do rather than for who you are, being able to communicate with people

you do not see and to receive communications from the outside world, or some other variable that mediates between education and cognitive development? (p. 66).

Two other problems they noted are 1) insufficient attempts to take the emic-etic dilemma seriously so as to design studies enabling one to take advantage of each approach and 2) a lack of a "theoretical framework within which to do such studies."

Similarly, the anthropologist Beatrice Whiting is concerned about the tendency to devote considerable attention to identifying dependent variables, or outcome behaviors, but " . . . less attention to the study of factors associated with differences in these processes and behaviors" (Whiting, 1973, p. 1). Whiting claims that it is time to unravel these "packaged" variables--sex, age, culture, social class, and socioeconomic status, for examples--to determine more systematically how they relate, in unpackaged form, to scores on tests.

As an example of "packaged variable" research, Whiting uses the earlier work of Berry, who used independent variables of a "low accumulation" society (Eskimo) and a "high accumulation" society (Temne) as a means to determine, among other things, the effect of "restrictive socialization" on perceptual style (e.g., scores on the Kohs Blocks or the Embedded Figures Test). Although Berry and others have significantly expanded upon studies of this type (see below), extricating himself, as he planned all along, from the dilemma of two-culture comparisons, Whiting claims that he still has not devoted enough time to exploring the independent variable, "restrictive

socialization," as one would wish. Anthropologists, probably much more than psychologists, believe that there are subtle layers of differences within any independent variable, and only through an ethnographic analysis of each can we discern the effect that each "truly" has on meaningful dependent variables. But Berry (and others working with this model) knows this possible initial shortcoming, and insists that this is what model-building and research in general is all about.

The Indian psychologist, Anandalakshmy, is similarly skeptical of what may be a shallow or casual assessment of independent variables. Using the neat packaged variable of the well-studied Indian "caste" as an example, she concludes that variance within castes can be great as variance across castes. "One might say," she says, "that the term 'caste' has been treated as an empirical reality, and then transformed to a general rule under which most behavior can be explained" (Anandalakshmy, 1974, in press).

Obviously these epistemological problems are not unique to cross-cultural psychology, for the same type of trouble spots are found even in animal laboratories.

The Use of Cross-Cultural Models

In the future, cross-cultural researchers in psychology will depend increasingly on cross-cultural "models." This will be done so as to integrate strategies and findings which may lead to more complete and valid generalizations about human behavior.

A brief summary of four models will be given. They are 1) the cognitive style or biosocial approach, 2) the Piagetian framework, 3) Cole's "unorthodox ethnography," and 4) Triandis' analysis of subjective culture.

The Cognitive Style or Biosocial Approach. Primarily three psychologists--John Berry, John Dawson, and Herman Witkin--have broken the major ground here. Generally, Berry and Dawson have followed Witkin's (1967) call for "cognitive style" research, postulating that each society fosters its own "style" with regard to cognitive development, and that such development is largely due to socialization and child-rearing practices. Early in the 1960's, Dawson examined, in Africa, the socialization dimension, and Berry's subsequent work utilized an ecological dimension as well. Berry's model is designed to accommodate four broad independent variables (culture, socialization, nutrition and disease, and the gene pool) as well as the ecological dimension, and how they differentially affect individual development. Dawson's "biosocial" model is similar.

A host of cultures have been studied using "hunter-gatherer" and "traditional-transitional" dimensions, employing at the same time the ecological dimension. Current as well as developing projects are being designed to "test the limits" of the model in areas like perception, acculturation, and social conformity. Thus far it has fared respectably well, and it is flexible enough to permit significant modification.

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The Piagetian Framework. Piaget's theories are used abundantly cross-culturally. His "stage and rate" notions with regard to the ultimate acquisition of "conservation" (i.e., ability to think abstractly) is naturally infinitely flexible in terms of experimental designs. Researchers generally examine a host of variables which theoretically can either accelerate or retard cognitive growth (according to a standard and questionable Genevan norm). Researchers, however, are growing wary of using the Piagetian model without looking more deeply into cultural factors that promote and, especially, "inhibit" cognitive growth. For example, why do "non-conservers" sometimes do quite well in school and on other tasks, but fail with water beakers and balls of clay?

Cole's "Unorthodox Ethnography." Cole and his associates take issue with those who infer deficits (e.g., in "intelligence") from "differences" (e.g., on ability tests). Rather than accepting these unanalyzed "findings" as prima facie evidence that cultural groups differ qualitatively, he calls for a union of ethnography and experimentation in efforts to pinpoint, in a cultural context, factors that account for alleged differences. Cole and associates endorse a painstaking emic analysis of cognition (see Cole et al., 1971, and Cole and Scribner, 1974, for details on this brand of experimental ethnography). Cole's approach is one of the few psychological efforts that even radical cultural relativists may cautiously accept as potentially fruitful. It is the only strategy that clearly has made detailed attempts to unravel the "packaged variable" that, as

mentioned earlier, bothers Whiting and others.

The same notions of the "cultural context" and "pure" emic analysis can be fruitfully extended to other areas as well, for example, in culture and personality investigations. Cole, however, has only been concerned with cognition, memory, problem solving, and the like.

Triandis' Analysis of Subjective Culture. Harry Triandis and colleagues both in the U.S. and several countries have investigated "subjective culture," or an individual's characteristic way of perceiving his social environment. Distrustful of standard personality tests, attitude measuring devices, and so forth, Triandis uses the culture-common aspects of Osgood's semantic differential technique to develop attitude-type scales within each country separately. He calls these instruments the Role Differential, the Behavior Differential, and the Antecedent-Consequent method. In this way the techniques may be on solid ground within one culture, and likely cross-culturally as well, since the "concepts" and "adjectival modifiers" he employs have proven cross-cultural merit. (See Triandis et al., 1972, for details.)

Triandis is convinced we need to look at typologies of behaviors (B), social settings (S) and persons (P), and that our laws should allow for the BSP interactions. The rationale for these (and with regard to cognitive complexity and interpersonal attitudes) can be found in Triandis (1974, in press) and some of his other recent work.

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